

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-03
INR-10 NSAE-00 ICA-11 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03
SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15 STR-07
CEA-01 L-03 H-01 ITC-01 CTME-00 GSA-02 INT-05
PA-01 /102 W
-----010176 092013Z /15

R 090548Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8986

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD
SUBJ: COPPER: GRZ CONCERN ON USITC INJURY FINDING

REF: STATE 196543

1. GRZ MINISTER OF MINES JAMES MAPOMA REQUESTED MEETING WITH CHARGE MORNING OF AUGUST 8. AT MEETING MAPOMA EXPRESSED GRZ CONCERN ABOUT USITC FINDING THAT COPPER IMPORTS ARE A SUBSTANTIAL CAUSE OF SERIOUS INJURY TO U.S. COPPER PRODUCERS (REFTEL).

2. MAPOMA POINTED OUT THAT WHILE ZAMBIA IS NOT A TRADITIONAL DIRECT SUPPLIER OF COPPER TO THE UNITED STATES, ZAMBIA WOULD NONETHELESS BE INDIRECTLY AFFECTED BY THE RULING SHOULD IT LEAD TO A RESTRICTION ON COPPER IMPORTS. (ZAMBIAN COPPER OFTEN ENDS UP BEING SHIPPED TO U.S. CONSUMERS AS PART OF SWITCHING ARRANGEMENTS AMONG PRODUCERS.)

3. MINISTER EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT U.S., AS ADVOCATE OF LIBERALIZED TRADE ESPECIALLY BETWEEN INDUSTRIAL AND DEVELOPING NATIONS, WOULD CONSIDER RESTRICTIONS ON THE COPPER
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TRADE. MAPOMA SAID HIS EXPERIENCE AT UNCTAD AND CIEC MEETINGS WAS THAT THE U.S. WAS INFAVOR OF DEVELOPING AND FACILITATING TRADE WITH LDCS AND THAT RESTRICTIONS ON COPPER IMPORTS SEEMED COUNTER TO THAT POLICY. HE ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT AS U.S. VERY OFTEN SETS THE EXAMPLE, OTHER INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES COOULD REACT TO THIS CHANGE IN U.S. TRADE POLICY BY INSTITUTING RESTRICTIONS AS WELL.

4. MAPOMA ALSO GAVE NUMBER OF REASONS OTHER THAN IMPORTS FOR CURRENT STATE OF U.S. COPPER INDUSTRY INCLUDING GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION AND MASSIVE USE OF RECYCLED COPPER. HE ALSO NOTED THAT MUCH OF THE COPPER IMPORTED BY U.S. CAME FROM COPPER MINES IN LATIN AMERICA WHICH WERE OWNED OR OPERATION BY U.S. COMPANIES.

5. CHARGE AND ECON OFFICER POINTED OUT THAT CURRENT U.S. ADMINISTRATION WAS ALSO COMMITTED TO FREE TRADE BUT THAT COPPER SITUATION IN U.S. WAS COMPLEX ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ISSUE. WE OFFERED TO PASS ON ZAMBIA'S CONCERN BUT SAID WE COULD NOT EVEN SPECULATE ON WHAT ACTION THE PRESIDENT MIGHT TAKE AFTER RECEIVING THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE COMMISSION. WE PROMISED TO KEEP HIM ADVISED ON THE MATTER.

6. COMMENT: ZAMBIA IS OBVIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT RESTRICTIONS ON U.S. COPPER IMPORTS WILL AFFECT THE COPPER MARKET AND THUS ZAMBIA'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE EARNINGS. THE EMBASSY RECOGNIZES THAT THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED IN THIS ISSUE ARE COMPLEX BUT BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT LOSE SIGHT OF THE POSSIBLE IMPACT ON OUR RELATIONS WITH ZAMBIA SHOULD PRESIDENT ACCEPT COMMISSIONER'S RECOMMENDATION. END COMMENT.
CLINGERMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: COPPER
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LUSAKA02755
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780326-0468
Format: TEL
From: LUSAKA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780883/aaaacrjr.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 26e66d66-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 196543
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1793635
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COPPER: GRZ CONCERN ON USITC INJURY FINDING
TAGS: ETRD
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/26e66d66-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014